Incarcerated giant hiatal hernia

An 89-year-old man with valvular heart disease and third-degree atrioventricular block with a permanent pacemaker presented with a 1-day history of nausea, coffee ground emesis, and dyspnea. Physical examination revealed hyperthermia of 37.8 °C, oxygen saturation measured by pulse oximetry of 94 %, and hemodynamic stability. Laboratory tests showed a hemoglobin level of 13.9 g/dL, leucocytosis of 13 640/mm³ with neutrophilia, and a C-reactive protein level of 3.8 mg/L. A chest radiograph showed a giant hiatal hernia with migration of the entire stomach with an air-fluid level in an 89-year-old man with valvular heart disease and third-degree atrioventricular block.

A chest radiograph showing a giant hiatal hernia with an air-fluid level in an 89-year-old man with valvular heart disease and third-degree atrioventricular block.

Giant hiatal hernia represents 5–10 % of all hiatal hernias and includes at least 30 % of the stomach in the chest [1, 2]. Most frequently, a giant hiatal hernia is a mixed hernia composed of a sliding and a paraesophageal component [2]. Patients generally present with pain, heartburn, regurgitation, dysphagia, cough, dyspnea, vomiting, and anemia [2, 3]. The incidence of incarceration and strangulation is low [2]. Usually, in symptomatic patients, the definitive management is surgical repair [4]. Furthermore, owing to the risk of hemorrhage, strangulation, volvulus, and perforation in paraesophageal and mixed hernias, elective repair is recommended [5].

Endoscopy_UCTN_Code_CCL_1AB_2AD_3AF

Competing interests: None

Ana Ponte1, Rolando Pinho1, Fernando Viveiros2, Joana Ferreira2, Amélia Tavares2, Carlos Fernandes1, João Carvalho1

1 Department of Gastroenterology, Centro Hospitalar Vila Nova de Gaia, Espinho, Portugal
2 Department of General Surgery, Centro Hospitalar Vila Nova de Gaia, Espinho, Portugal
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DOI http://dx.doi.org/10.1055/s-0034-1377946
Endoscopy 2014; 46: E561–E562
© Georg Thieme Verlag KG
Stuttgart · New York
ISSN 0013-726X

Corresponding author
Ana Ponte
Department of Gastroenterology
Centro Hospitalar Vila Nova de Gaia
Rua Conceição Fernandes
Vila Nova de Gaia 4434-502
Espinho
Portugal
Fax: +351-22-7868369
ana.ilponte@gmail.com